



Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

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10-Year, Multiple-Entry Visas to China

The United States and China recently agreed to begin issuing multiple-entry business/tourist visas valid **for 10 years to each other's respective citizenry. We've already started issuing 10-year visas to our Chinese applicants, and we're beginning to see more and more Americans with 10-year Chinese visas.** Students are also now eligible to receive visas with 5-year validity or for the duration of their studies. While visas are now valid for 5 or 10 years, the duration one is allowed to stay in country is still determined at the port of entry. For travel to the United States, a tourist or business traveler is typically allowed to stay up to 6 months, while students can remain for the duration of their studies.

Wait times for interview appointments in China have averaged less than one week at each post in Mission China for the last two years. Due to efficient processing, most applicants are able to enter the Embassy or Consulate, complete their interview, and depart in less than an hour. Changes in visa validity will not affect visa eligibility criteria, and the basic visa processing fee remains unchanged at the current rate of 160 USD. For more info, see the [State Department website here](#).

Emotional Support Services from Lifeline Shanghai

Living as an expat in China can be both exciting and challenging. Being away from your established support network, facing language difficulties, and being immersed in an unfamiliar culture can be completely overwhelming.

Often this adjustment is extremely difficult and it helps to have someone to talk to. But who can you talk to when you need support in facing the challenges of living and working in China or life pressures in general?

Recognising this need, Lifeline Shanghai was founded in 2004 to provide a crucial helpline for the international community of Shanghai. Taking calls from not only Shanghai but around China, this confidential, anonymous helpline provides information and emotional support when people need it the most.

At the heart of Lifeline Shanghai, is a group of dedicated volunteers who come from 30 different countries. Through active listening, volunteers listen, support and assist the caller to clarify options and choices that are best for them, in the belief that everyone has the right to be heard, supported and understood. In identifying the appropriate resources for callers, volunteers may refer the caller to appropriate psychological support services.

Lifeline Volunteers are screened carefully and receive intensive, ongoing training; adhering to a code of conduct and ethics as required by Lifeline International. Lifeline Shanghai values their volunteers and continually seeks those who would like to provide meaningful and valuable service to their community by joining in this work. Please consider contacting us for further information at www.lifeline-shanghai.com.

Lifeline Shanghai's mission is to enhance the resilience and well-being of Shanghai's international community and as such, meets regularly with mental health professionals and associations, consulates and businesses. Lifeline Shanghai provides presentations and training for various groups after consultation and a needs assessment is undertaken.

Lifeline Shanghai is here to listen 365 days a year between 10am and 10pm.
Expats from all over China are welcome to use this helpline service.
Call us - we're here to help (021) - 6279 8990.

***Note:** Lifeline Shanghai is a private organization and is not a service of the U.S. Consulate.*

Telephone & Police Investigation Scam

The American Citizen Services Unit recently received several reports of a common scam targeting foreigners whereby they are contacted by seemingly innocuous companies like a postal service or mobile phone provider and told that a criminal case is currently being pursued against them. The swindler informs the foreigner that their name is linked to money laundering or other crimes, and **in order to clear their name, they must transfer sums of money in order for “police” to “track” their case. In one case, a foreigner was actually told to download software that allows the “police” to control their computer remotely.** This might seem like an obvious scam, but the legitimate nature of the calls and the strong English and Chinese language skills of the callers have deceived many foreigners. We would like to remind all Americans to remain skeptical of any actions requiring money transfers. Victims are encouraged to file police reports, hold on to their money, and seek legal assistance as needed. The following are links from local news regarding these scams:

[21 Held As Police Crack Telephone Fraud Gang](#) - *Shanghai Daily*

[Telemarketing Scams Targeting Rich And Famous On The Rise](#) - *China Daily*

[Expats Urged To Be Alert As Telecom Scams Rise](#) - *Shanghai Daily*

Fake Flight Cancellation Text Messages Scam

The US Consulate was notified by a major travel company about the emergence of **a new scam in which scam artists steal travelers’ personal information such as flight numbers, cellphone numbers, and then send fake flight cancellation messages to the ticket owners.** The messages contain real passenger information but fake airline customer service phone numbers. Through those fake customer service hotlines, ticket holders are tricked into making unnecessary bank transfers. On the right is an example of one of these fake text message.

尊敬的旅客您好！您预订的2014年05月24日上海-沈阳，16:20起飞18:25到达，上海航空M9185航班，因机械故障已被取消，收到短信后及时与本次航班处理专线电话:4008956782联系办理退票或改签，以免耽误您的行程，如给您带来不便，敬请谅解！（注：如需改签，退票补偿200元，需要改签收取20元工本费由旅客本人支付）【上海航空】

Be on the alert for such messages. If you receive a similar message, you should first use official channels to confirm your flight schedule, and remember that neither your bank card numbers nor the verification codes are needed for ticket rescheduling or cancellation. Local news regarding the flight cancellation text messages scam can be found [here](#).

Interested in Joining the Shanghai Emergency Response Team?

The Emergency Response Team (also known as the Warden System) is a network of Americans living **long-term** in the Shanghai area that help the U.S Consulate disseminate information about important current events, health news, and security updates to the broader American public in China. If you would like to serve as a warden in your area, contact us at ShanghaiACS@state.gov for more information.

Leaving China?

Did you know that you can end your enrollment with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) by visiting the step.state.gov site? If you previously submitted a paper enrollment form to the U.S. consulate, you may end your enrollment by sending an email request to: ShanghaiACS@state.gov.

Travel Warnings And Alerts

Security reminder: *It is advisable that you and your family review your personal security profile and be aware of your surroundings at all times.*

Travel Warnings are issued to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff.

Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions generally within a particular country or region that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert.

Click here for current [Travel Warnings and Alerts](#).

Up-to-date information regarding permitted and prohibited flight items can be viewed online at www.tsa.gov. Please visit "[Americans Traveling Abroad](#)" on the State Dept website for more info.

The U.S. Department of State has issued recent **Travel Warnings** and new **Travel Alerts** for the following countries:

12/11/2014	Venezuela Travel Warning
12/04/2014	Haiti Travel Warning
12/02/2014	Potential Implications for Travel Because of Ebola in Parts of West Africa
11/26/2014	Lebanon Travel Warning
11/25/2014	Democratic Republic of the Congo Travel Warning
11/25/2014	Djibouti Travel Warning
11/21/2014	El Salvador Travel Warning
11/20/2014	Philippines Travel Warning
11/14/2014	Colombia Travel Warning
11/12/2014	Syria Travel Warning
11/05/2014	Central African Republic Travel Warning
10/31/2014	Burkina Faso Travel Alert

Upcoming Holidays & Other Closures

A full list of all of our closures is online at <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/service.html>. The ACS Unit will be **CLOSED** to the public on:

<u>December 25, 2014, Thursday</u>	Christmas Day	圣诞节	Shèngdàn Jié
<u>December 26, 2014, Friday</u>	Administrative Closure	行政管理日	Xíngzhèng Guǎnlǐ Rì
<u>January 1, 2015, Thursday</u>	New Year's Day	元旦	Yuándàn
<u>January 2, 2015, Friday</u>	Administrative Closure	行政管理日	Xíngzhèng Guǎnlǐ Rì
<u>January 19, 2015, Monday</u>	Martin Luther King Day	行政管理日	Mǎdīng Lù Dé Jīn Rì